

GROUP MEMORY
'AHIHI-KINA'U/KEONE'O'IO ADVISORY GROUP

June 28, 2004

9AM to 12PM

Kihei Community Center

Advisory Committee Attendance: Sydney Kikuchi, Charles Maxwell, Bob Davidson, Mark Nickerson, Hannah Bernard, Carrol Hall, Ann Fielding, Sumner Erdman, Pat Borge, Dino Ventura, Dan Davidson, Robert Luuwai, Vanessa Medeiros/Daniel Ornellas (DHHL added to Committee during the meeting), Gary Hashizaki (added to Committee at end of meeting)

Facilitator: Dee Dee Letts

Committee Staff: Christen Mitchell

The meeting was opened with a Pule by Kahu Maxwell.

A quick round of introductions was done for those in the audience that were new. The group began with the first agenda item, a discussion on gating the area. DLNR reported the following from their discussions internally and with the County since the last Advisory Committee meeting on the idea of gating the access:

- Gating is a good idea for controlling inappropriate night use of the area
- Not appropriate 24/7 as commercial use is currently banned in the area
- The gating would not be exclusive if you had a legitimate reason to be there in the evening
- The intent of the gating would be to protect the resource
- It is recognized that there will be many logistical issues to work out
- Further discussion is needed with the county on specifics
- Needs to be coordination with adjacent landowners to make sure it works
- Integration of the ranger and educational pieces is needed to make the concept of protecting the resource with open access during the day and gated at night work

General discussion by the group:

- Some members have talked with the Mayor and he is anxious to close the area off
- Like the gate idea but not just at night – until the rangers can regulate, the area should be closed during the day also
- Need to look at a system of permits
- Costs for a gate should not be prohibitive – my research says \$6,000 – do the residents want it
- The location of the gate must be safe from a traffic standpoint – area to turnaround, visibility, etc.
- The DLNR maps circulated identifying possible areas for the gate seem appropriate – area A would be easily breachable whereas B and C would provide less opportunities for going around the gate

- How do we deal with the fact that there are different regulation in the area according to whether it is NARS or unencumbered – how do we get some consistency
- Can we get the rental car companies involved by fining tourists for driving in areas marked as off-limits under their rental contract
- The ranch will be gating to stop vehicular traffic on to ranch land
- Gates are not cheap – they will need to be maintained and replaced – if you put them up someone will try to tear it down – I speak from experience
- HVB and hotels need to help with education of visitors
- All those involved need to get together to enforce, educate and control access
- If we close off the ponds that would eliminate a lot of the impact – ponds should be for educational purposes only

The group next heard a report from the Hawai'i Wildlife Fund:

- They are currently involved in a 3 year study to document human uses in the area
- Their study shows 700 people a day in the area and that 80% are visitors – also the peak times are between 10 and 4
- The educational station proposed in the HTA grant would be small and moveable – it would not have a permanent site
- The program would be called “Think Island”
- Funding is currently coming from CZM as the HTA grant money has not been released yet – current funding covers car surveys 2 days a month by the monument – they have noticed that mornings are quieter since commercial use was banned
- The cars may still enter and get counted but because there is not commercial activity they often turn around and go right back out
- People are acting more respectful without the commercial activity
- This data collecting function will transfer into the HTA grant as the CZM grant is ending
- We are not doing research or looking at use in the pond areas
- The HTA grant hasn't started yet

There was discussion around several issues about where the data was collected and whether volunteers or only paid persons were collecting. These discussions moved the group back to the issue of controlling access and the gate.

A motion was made (including several approved amendments) by Charles Maxwell and seconded by Carrol Hall. The motion was as follows and was unanimously adopted by the advisory group. Motion: It is recommended strongly that the state and county work together to accomplish all actions necessary to implement the placing of a gate at location “B” as soon as possible.

Next item of discussion was an update on the ranger positions. A copy of the HTA proposal including a description of these positions was passed out to Advisory Committee members. This clarified that these positions were to fulfill an educational and

The meeting was opened up for public comment and the following comments were received:

- Make sure you have enough funding for the gate
- Look at a program of volunteer docents
- If you adopt fees make them big to decrease the number of people entering
- The car survey took place on holiday weekends which may account for the continued high numbers of cars since the commercial closing – the holiday weekends are heavy local use times
- Statistic seem to differentiate between visitors and residents but do not track fishermen to the area – need to look at this – also if fishermen have to walk there is no security for their vehicles they leave behind – in other areas where this is the case there is heavy vandalism of the vehicles – we need to be able to see our vehicles while we fish
- Look at an annual permit process for fishing in this area
- Fishermen acknowledge that they have a few problem individuals but they are trying to keep the area clean and self police
- What are you going to do about dive boat operators
- Gate by itself will not preserve the area
- We should divert the money going into collecting statistics to enforcement – we know what the statistics are
- Education works and folks want it – get it going
- Guided tours only for tourists
- The area needs to be self-sufficient – money needed to preserve the area should come from those using it
- What do we do about the “bad apples” that ruin it for everyone

Public comment was closed and the group added a representative from the fishermen to the Advisory Group.

The next meeting was set for August 3, 2004 from 9 to 12. Proposed agenda items included a discussion on the impact of gating the access and other regulatory issues concerning Na Ala Hele trails. Maui Revealed will be asked to come do a presentation on their publication and address concern of the group regarding this. OTC and a boating operator will be invited to discuss boating issues with the group. A DLNR State Parks person will be invited as a resource to the next meeting. Access and issues left unresolved around the gating issue will be discussed. There will also be discussion on how the gating and partial closing should be announced.

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM